

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-13, 15, 16, 19-21, 23-26 and 28 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 15, 19 and 20 are amended, claims 17, 18, 22 and 27 are canceled, and claim 28 is added.

Entry of the amended claims is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution without incorporating additional subject matter); (3) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and/or (4) place the application in better form for appeal (if necessary). Entry is thus requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 1-13 are allowed. The Examiner is also thanked for the indication that claims 18, 19, 22, 25 and 26 contain allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, the allowable features of claim 18 have been incorporated into independent claim 15. Claims 17 and 18 are then canceled. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 15, 16 and 19 are allowable.

In addition, the allowable features of claim 22 have been incorporated into independent claim 20. Claim 22 is then canceled. Accordingly, it is believed that claims 20, 21 and 23-25 are allowable.

Further, allowable claim 26 has been re-written as new independent claim 28. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 28 is also allowable.

The Office Action appears to suggest that some of the allowable claims need amendment to overcome rejection(s) thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. However, Applicants note that there are no rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 set forth in the current Office Action. Previous rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, were set forth in the November 22, 2005 and November 6, 2006 Office Actions, and amendments in response thereto were submitted in Amendments filed on February 22, 2006 and January 12, 2007, respectively. It is believed that the previous amendments obviated the rejections under §112.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claims 15-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Japanese Patent No. 11-182528 (hereinafter JP '528). As noted above, claim 17 has been canceled and claim 15 has been amended to incorporate the allowable features of claim 18. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 is allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15 and 16 is respectfully requested.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claims 20, 21, 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,549,789 to Kfoury in view of JP '528. As noted above, claim 20 has been amended to incorporate the allowable features of claim 22. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 20, 21, 23 and 24 are allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned **Joanna K. Mason**, at the telephone number listed below.

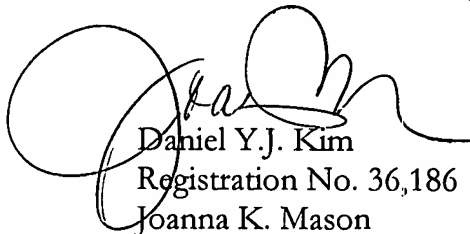
Serial No. 10/784,793

Docket No. IK-0075

Reply to Office Action of April 10, 2007

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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